(d) A separate Cell for Women is functioning in the Ministry of Labour to pay special attention to their problems. The Cell is responsible for the formulation of policies that seek to remove the handicaps under which they work, to strengthen their bargaining position, to improve their wages and working conditions, to enhance their skills and open up better employment opportunities for them.

Protection of workers interest

6812. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem "Government will protect workers interests" in the Hindustan Times dated 2-5-95;

(b) If so, the details thereof: and

(c) what steps have been taken so far to raise the economic standard of workers as well as their families like Japan and what budgetary provisions have been made in the Budget of 1995-96 as compared to 1994-95?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI P A. SANGMA) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government is committed to protecting the interests of workers. For this purpose a number of labour laws have been enacted. Suitable amendments in these Acts are carried out as and when considered necessary to protect the interests of workers

(c) In order to raise the economic standard of workers and their families, the Central Government by notification dated 12-7-94 revised the minimum rates of wages for 39 scheduled employments relating to Mining, Construction and Railway Sectors under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. The minimum wages for scheduled employments in agriculture were revised earlier on 12-8-92.

In the State sphere, minimum wages under the minimum wages Act have been fixed/revised in 1139 employments.

Besides, the workers were granted Rs. 600 crores by way to Interim Relief, Rs. 385 crores by revision of Industrial D.A., Rs. 250 crores by removing ceiling on gratuity and increasing its rate. The Textile workers benefitted by the raising of Provident Fund Contribution of management from 8.33 to 10 per cent.

A number of Plan and Non-Plan Schemes which aim at the economic betterment of workers form part of the budgetary provisions of the Ministry of Labour. However, separate figures for schemes exclusively pertaining to raising economic standards of workers are not maintained.

Rehabilitation of bonded children freed from Gajapati District in Orissa

6813. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the seven bonded children from Gajapati district of Orissa who were released following the intervention of the National Human Rights Commission have been rehabilitated; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI P A. SANGMA): (a) and (b) The Government of Orissa have reported that the seven Oriya children of Gajapati District released from bondage in Delhi have since been rehabilitated.

Accidents in Industrial establishments and mines

6814. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of accidents in industrial establishments and mines during last three years, state-wise;